

Washington- April 17, 2008

Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend and my hero, Mark Smith, and to congratulate Mark on his retirement as President of the Iowa Federation of Labor.

Over the past 34 years, Mark has been a fierce advocate for Iowa's working families. He started as an instructor at the University of Iowa Labor Center in 1974; was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the Iowa Fed in 1979, and served in that position until he was elected President of the Iowa Federation of Labor in 1997.

Mark has dedicated his life to the cause of working men and women in Iowa. Protecting the rights of workers has been a long and difficult struggle, and no one has given more time and energy to the cause than Mark Smith.

Mark is living proof that one person can make an enormous difference in the lives of thousands of individuals. Many of the people he helped never knew what he did for them and never had a chance to thank him personally. I stand here today on their behalf, because I want Mark to know that nameless people here are honoring his lifetime of heroic efforts. His lifetime of service leaves a legacy that challenges future generations of labor leaders to continue his efforts to further the cause of working families.

Mark may have retired from office, but he will never retire from his real passion, speaking out against injustice and pushing people to do more to take care of each other.